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Sullivan Creek Hydroelectric Project Negotiation Team Mediated Session

The second mediated session of the settlement negotiation team for the surrender of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license for the Sullivan Creek Hydroelectric Project, met in Newport, Washington, on January 7 and 8, 2009. The session agenda included such items as a presentation about the project prepared by the Pend Oreille Public Utility District (PUD) staff; a review of existing information and data for the project; and a first look at project options after the surrender of license. A website with information about the project is located at <http://sullivancreek.ecr.gov>.

The settlement negotiation team, which is made up of a mix of various state and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, the public utility district, local officials, and representatives of the local community, is working with the help of the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution to find options for resolving the issues for surrendering of the Project license.

“While this second mediated session was the first real look at options, no firm alternatives were identified,” said Cherie Shanteau-Wheeler, the mediator with the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution. “There is still a lot of work to be done, but the group has really begun to function effectively as a team” she added.

Members are working towards developing options that address all of their interests as they relate to the project and the surrender of license. Some of those interests included ongoing management and ownership of the project; fishing; recreation; the ecological values of Sullivan Creek; wetlands; threatened & endangered species, restoration of native fish; protection of National Forest System lands; economic viability of county communities; tourism; water quality; and costs to tax payers and utility rate payers.

The next session of the negotiation team will be in early February. The negotiation process is expected to last well into the summer of 2009.

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